Flourishing in learning and love - 'Do everything in Love" (1Corinthians16:14)

Castle Church of England Federation

Spiritual Development Guidance

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In this policy, the term 'headteacher' means the Executive Headteacher of the Federation except where the Executive Headteacher or the Governing Body has delegated the responsibility to the relevant Head of School.

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Spiritual Development Guidance

Castle Church of England Federation has adopted this definition of spirituality following a stakeholder consultation:

Spirituality is an ongoing reflective journey of something we cannot see, but something we feel inside ourselves. It enables us to connect with our self, others and the world. We flourish by experiencing and embracing awe and wonder. We are able to love, grow and succeed together, enabling us to be happy and living life to the fullest.

These four elements (self, others, the natural world, 'the beyond') form the basis of our work with children in developing a strong sense of spirituality.

Self

- Awareness of feelings; ability to reflect and express
- Awareness of our uniqueness; happiness with who we are
- Gratitude for the things we have and the person we are
- Exploration of personal faith
- Development of imagination, creativity and mindfulness

The natural world

- Developing a sense of awe and wonder
- Enjoying the miracles of everyday life
- Taking time for what really matters
- Appreciating beauty in art, music, nature

Others

- Empathy and understanding; respect, tolerance
- To love and be loved (loving your neighbour)
- Making a difference; duty

'The beyond' (the Sacred or Divine)

- Encountering/experiencing God (having a sense of what lies beyond the material/physical)
- Ability to formulate and discuss the 'Big Questions' (e.g. about life, death, suffering, nature of God)
- Opportunities for prayer, connecting with God
- Making sense of the world

Spiritual development is not about becoming more spiritual (in a measurable or expansive sense). It is about realising or becoming more and more aware of one's natural, innate spirituality.

"Spirituality is about our relationships with ourselves, our family, friends, those around us, to God and to all of creation." (Ursula King, Professor of religious studies and internationally renowned scholar on spirituality)

Teaching and learning

Through teaching and learning, we aim to ensure:

- The curriculum and all areas of our community life will be driven by our Christian vision and associated values
- Opportunities for spiritual development are actively planned into the curriculum and encouraged in all areas of school life
- Unplanned and spontaneous opportunities for spiritual development are recognised, acknowledged and/or celebrated by staff and children
- Collective worship celebrates the love of God for every individual and provides opportunities for children to respond and reflect on this
- A solid understanding of the Christian concept of the triune God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit; of prayer and of the Bible is nurtured and developed
- The school building and outdoor environment provides appropriate spaces for silence, stillness and prayer
- That children's spiritual capacities such as imagination, empathy and insight are fostered through the creative arts and interactive multi-sensory teaching strategies making use of the outdoor environment and relevant educational visits
- The provision of opportunities to listen attentively and observe carefully, listening with discernment, valuing what is good and worthwhile and making judgements through discussion and exchange of views and ideas
- Support for learning to live with success and failure for themselves and with others
- That moral development is linked to spiritual development through strategies such as 'windows, mirrors and doors' (see below)
- That our RE curriculum delivers knowledge and understanding of spirituality from a number of world faith and world view perspectives
- That children are given as many opportunities as possible to explore the wonder of the natural world and to develop an understanding of the Christian belief that creation is a gift from God to be enjoyed, cherished and protected
- Promotion of strategies for positive mental health (see our statement on mental health and wellbeing).

Approaches

We seek to find ways in which all areas of the curriculum can contribute to spiritual development. These may include:

- Seeking to foster spiritual capacities, e.g. imagination, insight and empathy
- Allowing children the security and opportunity to explore and express feelings and emotions and to celebrate diversity
- Providing opportunities for prayer including silence and stillness
- Sharing feelings and experiences that foster hope, joy, reassurance and encouragement
- Encouraging children to develop relationships based on our Christian vision and associated values
- Enabling children to make the links between the Church and Biblical teachings, the life of the school and the wider community and how these impact on their own understanding of themselves and their place within the world today
- Providing an environment that promotes space to reflect, think and wonder

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Kindness Resilience Respect Thankfulness

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Liz Mills (and the Stapleford Centre) developed the concept of the Spiritual Ring Doughnut.



The doughnut represents the 'whole child'. The outer ring is the tangible (Mind and Body); the hole represents the intangible (Spirit). Both parts are essential for it to be a complete ring doughnut.

This remains perhaps the best definition of spiritual development; it is the exploration and development of that 'hole' in our centre that makes us 'whole'.

We have adopted a "school language" that helps support spiritual development. We talk of spirituality being about how we respond to the

- Wows (awe and wonder)
- Ows (Sad times and responding to life's big and often difficult questions)
- Nows (the rhythm and ordinary patterns of our days)

of life.

Spirituality across the curriculum

At Victoria, the following opportunities provide spirituality moments across the curriculum

Subject	Opportunities
English	By exploring the books we have chosen in our English curriculum, pupils can explore their relationship with the world and experience their own world in a different way: exploring worlds far beyond their own. The world of literature allows pupils to explore their 'sense of self', empathise with characters and appreciate the possibility of something beyond the world they know and understand.
Maths	Provide opportunities for pupils to experience awe, curiosity and enjoyment through exploring patterns, structures and problem-solving in mathematics. Encourage pupils to reflect on their thinking, explaining methods and recognising that problems can be approached in different ways. Promote creativity and resilience, allowing pupils to make choices, learn from mistakes and celebrate "lightbulb moments". Support collaborative learning where pupils value others' ideas, listen respectfully and develop confidence in sharing their mathematical reasoning.
Science	By creating opportunities for pupils to ask questions about how living things grow, rely on and contribute to their environment. By demonstrating openness to the fact that some answers cannot be provided by science.
RE	By discovering wonder and joy through learning about and engaging with stories, celebrations, rituals and diverse expressions of religion and worldviews. By asking and exploring questions about meaning and purpose. By reflecting on ideas about God and considering different truth

	claims. By learning about spiritual practices such as worship and prayer, thinking about their significance for believers, and reflecting on any relevance they may have for their own life.
PSHE	By developing awareness of myself and others and responding to our needs and wants. By exploring meaning and purpose as individuals and as a society. By developing resilience and inner strength. By cherishing relationships. By valuing self as unique in the image of God. By experiencing trips of out school to discover the beauty in the world and develop sense of self.
History	By exploring local history, including churches, landmarks, or memorials, and understanding why they were important to people. By reflecting on how people remember significant events and how hope, faith, or belief guided their choices. By considering how things would be different if the course of events had been different; for example what difference would it have made if the Great Fire of London had not happened?
Geography	By using Google Maps and asking pupils to imagine what it might be like to live in different parts of the world; for example Kampong Ayer and Hellnar. By exploring exciting landscapes, people and cultures, helping them to feel amazed by the beauty of the Earth. By learning about different environments and how people care for them, pupils begin to understand that everything on Earth is connected. This helps them develop respect for nature and a sense of responsibility to look after our planet. By comparing their lives with pupils living in other countries.
DT	By enjoying and celebrating personal creativity. By reviewing and evaluating the things we create.
Art	By providing rich opportunities for pupils to explore awe and wonder, patterns and structures in Art, both manmade and in the natural world. By appreciating the beauty of shape and space. By exploring different artists' interpretations of a key figure or event and asking what the artist was trying to convey and the spiritual importance of Art throughout history. By allowing pupils to show what they know by expressing personal beliefs and values through imaginative artwork, by reflecting and celebrating their own personal creativity. By promoting the process of 'reviewing and evaluating'.
Computing	By wondering at the power of the digital age e.g. use of the internet. By understanding the advantages and limitations of the internet and social media. By using the internet as a gateway to big life issues.
Music	By experiencing music which will inspire, relax and interest them. By creating their own music and their own sounds they gain a sense of empowerment. By listening carefully to song lyrics to emotionally deepen them and give them a positive sense of self and motivation. By singing collectively to develop pupils value through being a community and motivate pupils to enjoy a musical experience together.
PE	By being aware of one's own strengths and limitations. By delighting in movement, especially when pupils can express genuine

	spontaneity. By taking part in activities such as dance, games, and gymnastics that help pupils become more focused, connected, and creative.

Spirituality across the curriculum

At Thoms Coram, the following opportunities provide spirituality moments across the curriculum

Subject	Opportunities
English	By exploring the books we have chosen in our English curriculum, children can explore their relationship with the world and experience their own world in a different way: exploring worlds far beyond their own. Children at TC describe reading as the chance to take them to 'a different world'. The world of literature allows children to explore their 'sense of self', empathise with characters and appreciate the possibility of something beyond the world they know and understand.
Maths	Provide opportunities for pupils to experience awe, curiosity and enjoyment through exploring patterns, structures and problem-solving in mathematics. Encourage pupils to reflect on their thinking, explaining methods and recognising that problems can be approached in different ways. Promote creativity and resilience, allowing pupils to make choices, learn from mistakes and celebrate "lightbulb moments". Support collaborative learning where pupils value others' ideas, listen respectfully and develop confidence in sharing their mathematical reasoning.
Science	By creating opportunities for pupils to ask questions about how living things rely on and contribute to their environment. By demonstrating openness to the fact that some answers cannot be provided by science.
RE	By discovering wonder and joy through learning about and engaging with stories, celebrations, rituals and diverse expressions of religion and worldviews. By asking and exploring questions about meaning and purpose. By reflecting on ideas about God and considering different truth claims. By learning about spiritual practices such as worship and prayer, thinking about their significance for believers, and reflecting on any relevance they may have for their own life.
PSHE	By developing awareness of myself and others and responding to our needs and wants. By exploring meaning and purpose as individuals and as a society. By developing resilience and inner strength. By cherishing relationships.

History	By thinking about how people's beliefs and values influenced their actions in the past, and how faith shaped communities. By exploring local history, including churches, landmarks, or memorials, and understanding why they were important to people. By reflecting on how people remembered significant events and how hope, faith, or belief guided their choices.
Geography	Children learn about different places around the world. Through geography lessons, children explore exciting landscapes, people and cultures, helping them to feel amazed by the beauty of the Earth. By learning about different environments and how people care for them, children begin to understand that everything on Earth is connected. This helps them develop respect for nature and a sense of responsibility to look after our planet. Geography also helps children learn about traditions, beliefs and ways of life from different countries, showing how culture and religion are often shaped by where people live. Through this, children learn to value diversity and develop an understanding of the world as a shared home.
DT	By enjoying and celebrating personal creativity. By reviewing and evaluating the things we create.
Art	By providing rich opportunities for pupils to explore awe and wonder, patterns and structures in Art, both manmade and in the natural world. By appreciating the beauty of shape and space. By exploring different artists' interpretations of a key figure or event and asking what the artist was trying to convey and the spiritual importance of Art throughout history. By allowing pupils to show what they know by expressing personal beliefs and values through imaginative artwork, by reflecting and celebrating their own personal creativity. By promoting the process of 'reviewing and evaluating'.
French	By exploring the beauty of languages from around the world. By exploring the way language is constructed. By asking questions and being aware of something 'bigger' outside of ourselves.
Computing	By wondering at the power of the digital age e.g. use of the internet and social media. By understanding the advantages and limitations of the internet and social media. By using the internet as a gateway to big life issues.
Forest School	By delighting in all elements surrounding the natural outdoor environment. Being absorbed in the present moment of the outdoors. Promoting creativity, teamwork and resilience, allowing pupils to make choices, learn from mistakes and celebrate themselves.
Music	Pupils will experience listening to music which will inspire, relax and interest them. Through creating their own music and their own sounds they will gain a sense of empowerment. Listening carefully to song lyrics will emotionally deepen them and give them a positive sense of self and motivation. Collectively singing will give pupils value through being a community motivated to enjoy a musical experience together.

PE	By being aware of one's own strengths and limitations. By delighting in movement, especially when pupils can express genuine spontaneity. By taking part in activities such as dance, games, and gymnastics that help pupils become more focused, connected, and creative.

Spiritual development only happens when we are open and willing to go deeper. We try to develop spirituality by being creative and engaging, by enabling our pupils to connect with stories, by empowering our children to ask and respond to questions, by promoting play and creativity and by developing relationships, by providing a sense of belonging and by the use of prayer and symbols. Our school is set in beautiful surroundings which help our children to appreciate the world around them from the very beginning of their school journey.

It is vital that all adults in school also see the need to develop their own spirituality for their own wellbeing, and so that they can effectively support and help our children and each other.

Our Christian values create an ethos in our schools where all children and adults are equally valued, we work together as a team, and all seek to achieve their potential. Our vision and values enable a quality of life within the context of Christian faith and rooted in biblical teaching.

Assessing the impact

Spiritual development cannot be measured and continued throughout our lives. However, spiritually developed children love and accept themselves and enjoy good relationships with each other. They take an interest and delight in the world around them; they are open to what lies beyond the material (this may manifest itself in faith/belief in God). They are able to express and understand feelings, they have a strong moral sense and a love of what is good. They are able to enjoy quiet and stillness, they possess an active imagination, and show joy in creativity and discovering new skills.